

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0023] with the following amended paragraph:

[0023] FIG. 34 3 is a block diagram illustrating an embodiment of the operation of a gaming device of the present invention;

Please replace paragraph [0026] with the following amended paragraph:

[0026] FIG. ~~6A-6E~~ 6A-6F are illustrations of different symbol carriers incorporating teachings of the present invention;

Please replace paragraph [0033] with the following amended paragraph:

[0033] Referring to FIG. 2, gaming device 10 may be provided with a central processor (CPU) 42 operably coupled to input logic circuitry 44 and output logic circuitry 46. Input logic circuitry 44 is employed to operably couple CPU 42 to input devices such as, for example, a touch screen segment 32t or physical button 32, coin acceptor 18, bill acceptor 20, player tracking card reader 26 or credit/debit card reader 28. Output logic circuitry 46 is employed to operably couple CPU 42 with output devices such as, for example, hopper 24, video monitor 40, ~~mete~~ meter displays 34 and printer 36. Video monitor 40 may, as previously noted, comprise a video display of any suitable type.

Please replace paragraph [0034] with the following amended paragraph:

[0034] CPU 42 is also operably coupled to controlling software memory 50, which includes assigned memory locations storing game software 52 and system software 54. Such controlling software memory 50 dictates when selected graphics or messages are displayed to a player, as well as when play sequences begin and end and management of wager input and award output. CPU 42 is also operably coupled to a second memory 56, which is employed to store data indicative of game statistics, number of plays, number of wins, etc. ~~Controlling~~ Controlling software memory 50, second memory 56, or other, ancillary memory (not shown) may be used to store data indicative of winning results, such as data representative of one or more symbol combinations, including winning combinations. Second memory 56 may also be used, for example, to store a bit map of the symbol pattern depicted as a matrix display on video monitor 40.

Please replace paragraph [0038] with the following amended paragraph:

[0038] Turning to the specific game aspects of the present invention, FIG. 4 and FIG. 5 show individual symbol carriers A 200, B 202, C 204, D 206, E 208, F 210, G 212, and H 214 that are each configured to bear more than one symbol. Symbols 400, 402, 404, 406, 408, 410, 412, and 414 are shown on an exemplary symbol carrier A 200 in FIG. 5. In this embodiment, the randomly selected or “chosen” symbol for determining winning events is the symbol which comes to rest at the end of a play sequence in a position that is attached to, or proximate an apex of, a nonlinear, geometrically shaped pay line. For instance, symbol carrier A 200 is attached to the pay line 1 (304), pay line 4 (310), pay line 6 (314), and pay line 9 (320); a table of exemplary pay lines 1 through 9 and their respectively attached symbol carriers A through H is set forth in FIG. 4 for clarity. During a play sequence, each individual symbol carrier such as symbol carrier A 200 may rotate about its center 326. Also, all symbol carriers may rotate as a group about the symbol carrier configuration center 328. Therefore, each symbol designated as the chosen symbol of each symbol carrier A 200 through H 214 used to determine winning events and payouts in this embodiment is the symbol connected to a pay line structure at the end of a play sequence. Thus, in this embodiment, connections between pay lines and symbol carriers serve as independent and distinct chosen symbol indicators for each of the symbol carriers A through H, respectively designated as 200, 202, 204, 206, 208, 210, 212, and 214. Pay lines 1 through 9, respectively designated as 304, 306, 308, 310, 312, 314, 316, 318, 320, and 322, shown in FIG. 4, each extend to either three or four symbol carriers arranged in a geometrical combination as shown by the lines between the respective symbol carriers and as compiled in the table comprising a portion of FIG. 4. Upon a wager being placed by the player, at least one pay line is activated. An additional wager or wagers may cause an additional pay line or pay lines to be activated.

Please replace paragraph [0039] with the following amended paragraph:

[0039] Alternative symbol carriers and chosen symbol indicators are shown in FIGS. 6A-6F. FIG. 6A shows a symbol carrier ~~200~~^{200a} bearing symbols ~~400, 402, 404, 406, 408, 410, 412, and 414~~ 400', 402', 404', 406', 408', 410', 412', and 414'. Chosen symbol indicator ~~442~~ 442a is depicted as a pointer, pointing at symbol ~~402~~ 402', but may point to any of the other symbols along axes 444, 446, 448, 450, 452, 460, or 462. During a play sequence, chosen symbol indicator ~~442~~ 442a may rotate or otherwise change orientation among the available symbols ~~400 through 414~~ 400' through 414' present to indicate a chosen

symbol. Symbol carrier ~~200~~ 200a may remain rotationally stationary, or may itself rotate either in the same direction or counter to rotation of chosen symbol indicator ~~442~~ 442a. Rotational speeds of symbol carrier ~~200~~ 200a and of chosen symbol indicator ~~442~~ 442a may differ as well. Significantly, all symbols ~~400 through 414~~ 400' through 414' may be continuously visible to a player during a play sequence.

Please replace paragraph [0040] with the following amended paragraph:

[0040] FIG. 6B shows a symbol carrier ~~200~~ 200b bearing symbols 400' through 414' wherein each symbol is separated into a compartment or segment of the symbol carrier ~~200~~ 200b. Further, the chosen symbol indicator ~~442~~ 442b is simply a color that fills or otherwise emphasizes the compartment of the selected symbol as, for example, by illuminating same. Symbol ~~412~~ 412' is shown as being the selected symbol, because its compartment is highlighted or otherwise accentuated to convey symbol ~~412~~ 412' as the selected symbol of symbol carrier ~~200~~ 200b. Alternative chosen symbol indicators include emphasized borders, emphasized (bolded) symbols, flashing symbols, color changes, animated sequences, or other visible indications. Also, chosen symbol indicators may change, oscillate, or alter during a play sequence or series of play sequences to enhance player enjoyment and provide new and exciting gaming experiences.

Please replace paragraph [0041] with the following amended paragraph:

[0041] FIG. 6C shows yet another symbol carrier ~~200~~ 200c with a different chosen symbol indicator ~~442~~ 442c. Symbol carrier ~~200~~ 200c is configured with eight symbols ~~400, 402, 404, 406, 408, 410, 412, and 414~~ 400' through 414' and is shaped about its outer periphery as a circle with its inner periphery forming eight congruent indentations one for each symbol. In addition, evenly-spaced radially extending lines divide the area between the outer and inner periphery into eight smaller areas, ~~421, 423, 425, 427, 429, 431, 433, and 435~~. Symbol ~~406~~ 406' is depicted as the selected symbol, with the area ~~426~~ 427 between the outer and inner periphery being highlighted or otherwise accentuated to indicate the selected symbol.

Please replace paragraph [0042] with the following amended paragraph:

[0042] In addition, a symbol carrier may display more than one selected symbol. For instance, different shapes or colors of chosen symbol indicators may be used to provide

chosen symbols for any number of pay line configurations. Therefore, symbol carriers may comprise more than one chosen symbol indicator, as shown in FIG. 6D. Chosen symbol indicators ~~442, 442', and 442''~~ 442d, 442d', and 442d'', respectively shown as a circle, square, and triangle, indicate different chosen symbols within the same symbol carrier ~~200''''~~ 200d. Thus, in the pay line configuration shown in FIG. 5, each pay line may be associated with one or more chosen symbol indicators. Also, symbol carrier ~~200''''~~ 200d of FIG. 6D illustrates a symbol carrier bearing ~~twelve symbols 402 through 424~~ 402' through 422'. Symbol carriers are not limited in geometry or number of symbols that they may bear. However, all symbols borne by each symbol carrier may be continuously visible to the player during a play sequence. Furthermore, chosen symbol indicators may be mutually exclusive, thus precluding another chosen symbol indicator associated with a given symbol carrier from selecting the same symbol thereon. Alternatively, chosen symbol indicators may be mutually inclusive, thus allowing for one symbol on a symbol carrier to be selected by more than one chosen symbol indicator associated with that symbol carrier. The positions and number of multiple chosen symbol indicators, if permitted by the game architecture, may be determined by corresponding randomly generated events. Such flexibility allows for expanded pay line configurations as well as higher maximum payouts due to increased possible symbol combinations.

Please replace paragraph [0044] with the following amended paragraph:

[0044] FIGS. 6E and 6F illustrate other embodiments for chosen symbol indication. FIG. 6E shows a columnar organization for exemplary text symbols ~~402, 404, 406, 408, 410, and 412~~ 402'', 404'', 406'', 408'', 410'', and 412''. Chosen symbol indicators ~~442~~ 442e in the form of arrows are located outside of the periphery of the symbol carrier ~~200''''~~ 200e to indicate the chosen symbol ~~412~~ 412''. Similarly, FIG. 6F shows a columnar arrangement for symbols ~~402, 404, 406, 408, and 410~~ 402''', 404''', 406''', 408''', and 410''', where the symbols are graphic representations. In addition, chosen symbol indicators ~~442~~ 442f comprise one or more flashing arrows appearing on the inside of the symbol carrier ~~200''''~~ 200f to indicate the selected symbol ~~402~~ 402'''.

Please replace paragraph [0050] with the following amended paragraph:

[0050] FIG. 8 shows another embodiment of symbol alignment gaming incorporating the teachings of the present invention. Symbol carriers ~~200, 202, 204, 206, 208, and 210~~

200', 202', 204', 206', 208', and 210' are positioned around the outer periphery of first circle 330. Symbol carriers ~~212, 214 and 216~~ 212', 214', 216' are positioned around the outer periphery of second circle 340. First and second circles 330 and 340 are coaxial about center point 350. ~~As~~ As with the embodiment of FIG. 7, the symbol carriers of each group may rotate about center point 350, as desired. In this embodiment, connection between the pay line and the symbol carrier does not coincide with the chosen symbol(s). Symbol carriers similar to the symbol carrier shown in FIG. 6C are shown. However, each symbol carrier of FIG. 8 contains two mutually inclusive, independent, chosen symbol indicators, 442 and 442'. Also, three lines 380, 382, and 384 define the pay lines in this embodiment. By way of illustration, pay line 380 intersects symbol carriers ~~208, 214, and 202~~ 208', 214', and 202'. Each chosen symbol indicated by way of chosen symbol indicators 442 of symbol carriers ~~208, 214, and 202~~ 208', 214', and 202' make up one combination along pay line 380. In addition, each chosen symbol indicated by way of chosen symbol indicators 442' of symbol carriers ~~208, 214, and 202~~ 208', 214', and 202' make up a second combination along pay line 380. Therefore, the number of chosen symbol indicators per symbol carrier determines the number of different combinations that may be created along a pay line via a combination of symbol carrier(s) in this embodiment.